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PSI ON CAPITOL HILL

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By William K. Stuckey

It is not clear whether Charlie Rose seeks the ever-growing Mind-Over-Far-Out (MofO) vote—Governor Jerry Brown of California certainly does—or what Rose would do with it if he got it. The MofO vote is not very conspicuous in the tidewater district of North Carolina that Rose represents as a Democratic congressman. But Charlie (that's what he puts on his letterhead) certainly has the pulpit and connections, possibly the power, and definitely the inclination to produce a MofO spectacular.

What Representative Rose would like to do is call a congressional hearing soon to confirm publicly that the CIA and the Pentagon have successfully demonstrated that certain psi powers are real and can be used for intelligence purposes, and the Soviet Union is probably ahead of the United States.

Rose is the chairman of the evaluation subcommittee of the House Permanent Committee on Intelligence and, as such, is a principal watchdog of spook affairs. In that capacity, he has recently witnessed several classified demonstrations of "remote viewing" by Stanford Research Institute (SRI) and intelligence personnel—in which the experimental subjects "viewed" persons and places thousands of kilometers away in certain "interesting" countries.

"All I can say is that if the results were faked, our security system doesn't work," Rose told me cryptically. "What these persons 'saw' was confirmed by aerial photography. There's no way it could have been faked."

As for the Soviet Union's undertakings in this area, Rose disclosed, "I've been told by the CIA that the Russians are very interested in psychic phenomena and that their whole effort is underground. They have a national screening program to detect mathematical, artistic, or psychic abilities in schoolchildren. The CIA, on the other hand, spends next to nothing in this area, except to find out what the Russians are doing."

The witnesses Rose would call include CIA officials who, Rose said, "know this remote-viewing stuff works but who have

been blocked by publicity-shy superiors." Another key witness might be Dr. Robert Jahn, dean of engineering and applied science at Princeton University, who with graduate student Carol Curry is developing an instrument to detect small-scale psychokinetic effects—not of the theatrical Geller spoon-bending type, but a more modest effort to determine whether a subject might "will" a grain of sand to move.

Diehard MofOers will also recognize the names of other potential witnesses, such as Edgar Mitchell, the astronaut who conducted an ESP experiment (with apparently ambiguous results) between the moon's surface and Earth; Dr. Harold Puthoff and Russell Targ, two Stanford Research Institute psychic researchers whose reports, claiming that literally every person they have tested can perform remote viewing, have been published in *Nature* and the *IEEE Proceedings*; and Dr. Willis Harman, an SRI futures researcher,

widely sought after by major corporations and foundations, who is so convinced of the reality of psychic phenomena that he "wouldn't walk across the street to witness a levitation."

Congressman Rose, like Harman and the other potential witnesses, in other words, *has seen and believes*.

"Some of the intelligence people I've talked to know that remote viewing works, although they still block further research on it, since they claim it's not yet as accurate as satellite photography," Rose asserted. "But it seems to me that it would be a hell of a cheap radar system. And if the Russians have it and we don't, we are in serious trouble. This country wasn't afraid to look into the strange physics behind lasers and semiconductors, and I don't think it should be afraid to look at this."

When I first met him, Charlie was concerned that some of the academic debunkers of the psychic—whose principal spokesman is Martin Gardner, of *Scientific American*—might stifle objective, High Science research in this fiercely debated area. That he might even "investigate" the debunkers adds another dimension to the hearings Rose proposes. Charlie might also find himself in a locked-horn mode with some of the keenest thinkers of the day: Dr. John Wheeler, for example, a renowned physicist, who wrote the first paper on nuclear fission with Niels Bohr and who associated with Einstein for more than 20 years, recently suggested the expulsion of parapsychology groups from the respected umbrella organization, the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

But Wheeler and Gardner are not close to His Leadership and Democratic Highness Boston's own Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, and Charlie Rose is. Rose fits some, but far from all, of the stereotypes that New York parochials would attach to Southern congressmen. It is true that he is a Southern Presbyterian, and a "religious one"; that he loves his chairmanships of various agricultural subcommittees on poultry, dairy products, and tobacco



Rep. Charlie Rose in front of the Capitol.

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(Please don't forget to check Mr. Salk's record) and that he is not a scientist or intelligence professional, but a Chapel Hill, North Carolina, lawyer and former county prosecutor. You see that trap jaw and hear the accent and you think of those relaxed rural D.A.s who might say, "Now Jake, we know you killed your wife. So don't go lyin' about it. Just get your story together while I go get you a cup of coffee."

The other Charlie Rose, however, is a protégé of Terry Sanford, the former southern liberal governor of North Carolina, ex-university president, and a once-hopeful entrant into Democratic presidential primary elections—which attracted "all the bright young Southern liberals like Charlie Rose," and not one veteran Capitol observer. Elected to Congress in 1972, Rose made a key early commitment to support O'Neill for House majority leader. Tip, now speaker of the House, considers Charlie one of his key Southern lieutenants, one who doesn't mind doing the necessary but dirty and no-publicity-value jobs that keep Congress functioning. The House Intelligence Committee (chaired by another of Tip's buddies, Massachusetts Representative Edward Boland) is one super job, since most of its hearings are closed to the life-giving (to congressmen) press and

back home.

There are two more Charlie Roses that don't fit country stereotypes. One is the Rose who is the House's acknowledged expert on computers, according to Gary Hymel, the speaker's right-hand man. And Rose is founder of Capitol Hill's most Mofo activity, the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future—"the science-fiction wing of Congress," according to a science-oriented congressman.

The Mofo aspect of the clearinghouse is detected in the pages of its fascinating monthly newsletter, "What's Next?" There one finds the news and views of the L-5 space colony people, the anarchistic appropriate technology of wondrous Karl Hess, the soft-energy boys, the worker-owned-corporation boosters, the cosmic-consciousness kids, and the Committee for the Elimination of Death. Under its imaginative director, Ann Cheatham, the clearinghouse also holds its monthly "Chautauqua Congress"—think-and-talk sessions with both "futures," and more conventional, experts, who produce recommended legislation with a longer-than-usual-term twist. (For the remainder of the year Chautauqua will deal with future housing; "soft" appropriate technology vs. "hard" conventional technology; the scientific nature of life, including genetic manipulation; the future social culture; and even "cosmic consciousness.")

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red to lead the Mofo prophets? Well, he yet another convert to Alvin Toffler, the respected futurist-author of *Future Shock*. Toffler convinced Rose that Congress was playing Russian roulette with the future by ignoring it in most of its legislation. He introduced Rose to that growing think-tank industry of futurology, which according to one (of several conflicting) definitions, uses available information and mixes in hunches and personal theories to predict what is going to happen in crucial and vital areas. In 1974 Congress passed an internal act requiring its committees to conduct periodic futures research, and by 1976 Rose and Cheatham were sending the House a stream of both close-in and farthest-out futurists to prophesy what lay in store for all of us.

Today the clearinghouse functions as a "caucus," not an official congressional committee, but rather an informal Hill-based activity financed by contributions from interested members of Congress and other supporters. Many Senate luminaries are firmly behind the project.

Though it can't yet claim many legislative victories, Rose's clearinghouse—in conjunction with Rose's hearings on psychic intelligence gathering—will no doubt lead to some of the oddest debates, most astounding legislation, and weirdest witnessings in congressional history. California has set up shop on Capitol Hill. **DD**